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Tape Reportedly Made of Spy Suspect Played

By CHARLES MAHER, Times Staff Writer

A voice alleged to be that of Polish national Marian W. Zacharski acknowledged complicity in an espionage scheme on a tape recording played Tuesday for a Los Angeles federal court jury.

A man identified by the government as Zacharski said on the tape that he seemed to recall having received a partial delivery of information on a U.S. fighter plane from William Holden Bell, a former Hughes Aircraft Co. engineer who has pleaded guilty to espionage.

Zacharski, 30, is being tried on a charge of conspiring with Bell to pass sensitive U.S. defense information to Polish agents. Bell, who said he received money from Zacharski and from Polish agents in Europe, is the government's chief witness.

Bell, 61, testified Tuesday that he surreptitiously taped a conversation with Zacharski on June 28, using a recorder strapped to his body by FBI agents.

Bell said he made the recording outside the apartment complex

where he and Zacharski lived in Playa del Rey. Zacharski had moved there after becoming West Coast representative of the Polish American Machinery Co., a firm owned by the Polish government.

Assistant U.S. Atty. Robert S. Brewer Jr. interrupted his examination of Bell Tuesday to have the recording played back for a jury in the court of U.S. District Judge David V. Kenyon.

A government-prepared transcript of the tape was withheld from the press, but the following was pieced together from handwritten notes.

Bell: There are three or four things we ought to talk about. There's been a development. They're going to combine (two programs) and I'm supposed to take it over.

Second voice: Which ones?

Bell: Assault Breaker and Remover. (The programs were not further identified.) I've gathered several documents, some of which are secret, to be filmed. And I should film them next week. The second thing is I want to make damn sure they (Polish agents) don't hand me any gold (when we meet) down in Mexico. I want cash in small amounts.

Second voice: No problem.

Bell: The third thing is I think it's going to be difficult for us to make contacts (in the future). I want someone I can see on a regular basis.

Second voice: Sure, I'll tell them to work out something on the situation.

Bell: You remember if I (provided) a copy of . . . a secret thing—I think it was on the F-15?

Second voice: Partially, I guess so.

Bell: If you come by next week, I'll give you (inaudible) especially since I'll be working in a black (high-security) area.

The two men apparently separated.

Bell: It's now 9:30 (a.m.). The contact has been made and I'm returning to my apartment. . . . I hope this damn thing works.

An FBI agent was waiting in the apartment.

Bell: Everything went great. I got the information (federal agents) wanted. . . . He was sort of spooked out because the (FBI) guys are on his tail. . . . I hope this damn thing worked.

The tape ran about four minutes. Asked during a recess if there was any question that the second voice on the tape was Zacharski's, defense attorney Edward M. Stadum said he would not comment.

Bell testified that he decided on June 23 to cooperate with the government. Four days later, he said, he agreed when asked by FBI agents to wear a "body recorder" during a conversation with Zacharski.

"The recorder was placed on my back with wires taped to my body in various places," Bell said.

He testified he knocked on the door of Zacharski's apartment three times before finding him in. Then, he said, Zacharski told him he didn't want to talk that day because "the bloody guys (FBI agents) are all over me."

The next morning, Bell said, Zacharski came to his apartment and the recording was made while they took a walk outside.

Bell said he had given Zacharski "both unclassified and confidential" information on the F-15 in early or mid-1979.

Bell testified that Zacharski had asked him on various occasions if he had "anything interesting to read" and had requested information about a high energy laser, F-15 radar and the Cruise missile.

Sometimes, Bell said, Zacharski would "ask for documents by name" and give Hughes Aircraft or military document numbers.